



J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

June 22, 2006

TO: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – KIDS FIRST
FOUNDATION GROUP HOME, MID VALLEY YOUTH CENTER**

We have completed a review of Mid Valley Youth Center Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Kids First Foundation, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Mid Valley Youth Center Group Home is an 84-bed facility, which provides care for children ages 12-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Mid Valley Youth Center Group Home was providing services for forty-one Los Angeles County probation children, ten San Bernardino County children, five Santa Clara County children, two Sacramento County children, two Alameda County children, two privately placed children, and one Humboldt County child.

Mid Valley Youth Center Group Home is located in the Third District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection,

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address the following deficient areas:

The Agency needs to repair the heating system; repair or replace the floors in the hallways of the first and third floors; repair and paint the damaged walls throughout the Group Home; repair the ceiling tiles; repair the water damage in the entrance of the facility, and the kitchen; replace missing light fixture covers; clean the first floor dayroom carpet; replace the toilet in the dayroom bathroom; repair all the community showers on the first floor; remove graffiti from the second floor dayroom pool table; and repair the shower on the second floor.

Throughout the children's bedrooms and bathrooms, the Agency needs to replace the windows, broken dressers and desks; repair or replace the floors and baseboards; and repair and paint the doors and door frames.

In addition, the Group Home needs to provide children with the minimum weekly allowances; and encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:asl

http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Lucretia Whitehead, Executive Director, Mid Valley Youth Center Group Home
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Mid Valley Youth Center
7533 Van Nuys Boulevard
Van Nuys, California 91405
Phone: (818) 904-0707
License Number: 191220771
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Mid Valley Youth Center Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

However, the interior of the Group Home is not well maintained. The heating is not working properly; the hallway floors are damaged and stained on the first and the third floors, and the hallway walls are stained and dirty. Some of the ceiling tiles have holes, and are bent or warped. The facility entrance, kitchen ceiling, and walls have water stains. Most of the fluorescent light fixtures are missing covers.

The first floor dayroom carpet is dirty, and the dayroom bathroom is missing a toilet bowl. In the community showers on the first floor, the shower head and the wall around the shower are broken in the first shower; there are several holes in the tiles, and the vents and soap holders are dirty and rusty in the second shower; and the shower door is missing in the third shower. On the second floor, one of the showers has large openings in the wall from plumbing repairs. The second floor dayroom pool table is damaged with graffiti writing.

In the children's bedrooms, there is adequate lighting and storage space. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate. However, throughout the children's bedrooms and bathrooms, many of the desks and dressers are broken and have missing drawers and knobs; the floors are damaged and stained, and the baseboards are missing; the walls are dirty, have peeling paint, and unfinished patch repairs; the doors are dirty, damaged, and are missing knobs; the windows have cracks, and paint stains; and the window frames have several layers of caked-on paint. The ceiling vent is broken in bedroom eleven on the first floor, and the closet in room three on the first floor needs to be painted.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including computers with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

1. Mid Valley Youth Center management:

- a. Repair the heating system.
- b. Repair or replace the floors throughout the facility.
- c. Repair and paint the walls throughout the facility.
- d. Replace the damaged ceiling tiles.
- e. Repair the entry way and kitchen ceiling water damage.
- f. Replace missing fluorescent light fixture covers as needed.
- g. Clean the first floor dayroom carpet.
- h. Replace the toilet bowl in the dayroom bathroom.
- i. Repair all the community showers on the first and second floors.
- j. Remove graffiti from the second floor dayroom pool table.
- k. Replace the windows in the children's bedrooms.
- l. Repair and paint all the doors throughout the facility.
- m. Replace the missing floor baseboards throughout the facility.
- n. Paint the closet in room three on the first floor.
- o. Repair or replace the broken dressers and desks in the children's bedrooms.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Five

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include long and short-term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Five

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Five

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Five

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Five

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowances.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

2. Mid Valley Youth Center management:

- a. Provide all children with the required minimum weekly allowance.**
- b. Encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**



March 11, 2006

Alex Sigal-Liberman, MA
Office of the Auditor-Controller
500 W. Temple Street, Room 515-A
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Ms. Liberman

RE: Group Home Review January 25, 2006

The graffiti in the bedrooms, i.e., walls, windowsills, furniture, vanities and bathrooms has been completely removed and is on going. All bedrooms closets have new covers and we have ordered new dressers to replace the broken ones.

All the vanity in the rooms have been repaired and we will be looking at changing soon of them.

All the holes in walls have been repaired and we are putting in new wall board on all units.

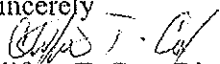
All missing door knobs have been replaced.

We are looking for a professional clean service to come in and clean the building and hope to do this quarterly. Our Maintenance Department will be keeping it up between services of the professional company.

We are getting a quote on replacing the flooring through out the building.

The residents allowance was changed to the amount that was due as of November 2005 and money put in each account to bring them up to date.

Sincerely


Clifton T. Cox, Director of Sit Operation
Mid Valley Youth Center